

Oasis Church International Mental Health Moment

July 2021 Highlight:

NAMI Honors Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month

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Arlington, VA — The National Alliance on Mental Illness, [NAMI](#), is working to raise awareness about the importance of equitable access to mental health care in underrepresented communities. Our culture, beliefs, sexual identity, values, race, and language all affect how we perceive and experience mental health conditions. In fact, cultural differences can influence what treatments, coping mechanisms and supports work for us. It is essential for culture and identity to be a part of the mental health conversation and [NAMI's identity and cultural dimensions](#) is a good place to start for information.

In 2008, July was designated as the [Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month](#) by the U.S. House of Representatives. There have been recent attempts to change the month's name, but at NAMI we continue to recognize the importance of honoring Bebe Moore Campbell's incredible legacy and groundbreaking work. She was an author, advocate, co-founder of NAMI Urban Los Angeles, national spokesperson and a mental health leader in the Black community. She worked tirelessly to eliminate stigma among diverse communities.

“The effect of racism and racial trauma on mental health is real. It is essential for culture and identity to be a part of the mental health care conversation,” said Daniel H. Gillison Jr., NAMI CEO. “We’re all dealing with change, uncertainty, and mental health challenges and need to accept that mental health vulnerabilities do not discriminate, and neither should our mental health care system. We are calling for improved access to quality, culturally-competent care and advocating for systematic change to the mental health care infrastructure.”

Racism is a public health crisis. Persisting disparities in health outcomes and access to mental health care in underserved communities show that reality. NAMI will lead the conversation around these concerns by facilitating much-needed conversations through our [Sharing Hope](#) initiative, an in-depth set of empowerment tools for NAMI affiliates created to help shape how we talk about mental wellness in Black and African American communities. We offer compelling stories and fresh perspectives on mental wellness targeted to specific audiences, including youth, families, and community leaders. Our goal is to connect members of underserved communities to the best care possible, as early as possible, and to drastically curb the effect that institutional racism has on mental health access and awareness for communities of color.

NAMI is releasing new additions to the [Strength Over Silence](#) series focused on stories of courage, culture and community. In this ongoing docuseries, NAMI highlights perspectives on mental health across backgrounds and communities. Through candid and courageous stories of lived experience, these mental health champions share their resilience and recovery, emphasizing the importance of culture and identity in the mental health movement.

The NAMI community is here to help connect people and their families to mental health resources locally and nationally. NAMI is an alliance of more than [600 local affiliates](#) working to overcome stigma in communities with free support and education programs.

Together, we can help raise mental health awareness in underrepresented populations so they can get the mental health care they need to overcome obstacles and live healthy, fulfilling lives in a community that cares.